

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### **S&W Manufacturing Inc.**

#### **South Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership**

#### **Implementing Set Up Reduction**

##### **Client Profile:**

S&W Manufacturing Inc., founded in the early 1990's, is a division of Smead, a manufacturer of file folders available in large office supply stores nationwide. S&W custom manufactures file folders and labels, uses specialty dies, and custom prints folders for companies in the insurance, medical, and government sectors. The company makes 100 million folders per year in its 140,000 square foot facility in Florence, South Carolina, and sells its products through a distribution network. Custom printing jobs range from quantities as small as 25 to as large as two million folders. Through a transition of two previous owners, the facility has grown from 25 employees to 178.

##### **Situation:**

S&W Plant Manager Walt Parker first heard about the Manufacturing Extension Partnership network from his parent company who was working on lean initiatives with Minnesota Technology, Inc. (MTI), a NIST MEP network affiliate. Parker contacted South Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership (SCMEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, to help with a SMED, or setup reduction, in its paper converting process. Since the machinery used to print file folders was so long, about 20 feet, operators spent a lot of time walking from one end of the machine to the other to change it over for the next custom job. Setup time was eight hours.

##### **Solution:**

SCMEP employed the services of Premiere Source Lean Manufacturing Group (PSLMG) to facilitate the setup reduction project. David Woods of PSLMG led a cross-functional team of operators and managers in the five-day initiative. They filmed the entire setup process and then dissected the film second-by-second to look for wasted motion. In the final analysis, the team searched for ways to eliminate all wasted motion. Overall, Parker is happy with the knowledge transfer process between SCMEP, PSLMG, and S&W. He is currently working on another SMED initiative and eventually wants all machine operators to participate in the process.

##### **Results:**

- \* Reduced setup time to one hour and eight minutes, eliminating 135 steps in the process.
- \* Increased setup efficiency by 25 percent.
- \* Anticipated impacts foreseen within 6 months.

##### **Testimonial:**

"Plant-wide setup efficiencies have increased by 25 percent since project inception one month ago."  
Walt Parker, Plant Manager

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